

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 IO-14 SAJ-01 SAM-01 NIC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SCCT-02 OMB-01

ACDA-19 DRC-01 /155 W

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R 061945Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1430

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L 12078

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, UR, XF

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ON ARAFAT VISIT AND
SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

REF: MOSCOW 11930

1. SUMMARY. DURING COURTESY CALL BY EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HAFEZ ISMAIL AUGUST 5, HE DISCUSSED RECENT ARAFAT VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION AND CURRENT STATE OF EGYPTIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. HAFEZ SAID THAT THE PLO "REPRESENTATION" IN MOSCOW WOULD BE NEITHER A DIPLOMATIC NOR AN INFORMATION OFFICE AND WOULD BE ACCREDITED TO THE SOVIET AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE. HE SAID THAT A BREZHNEV-SADAT SUMMIT WAS NOT CURRENTLY "ON THE TABLE" BUT EXPRESSED THE
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CONVICTION THAT SUCH A MEETING SHOULD AND WOULD TAKE PLACE

"IN DUE COURSE." END SUMMARY.

2. IN DISCUSSING THE ARAFAT VISIT COMMUNIQUE (REFTEL), HAFEZ AGREED WITH MY READING THAT THE PLO HAD APPARENTLY NOT PERSUADED THE SOVIETS TO GO ALL THE WAY IN GRANTING IT RECOGNITION AS THE SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. HAFEZ ADDED THAT, DESPITE THE AMBIGUITY IN THE COMMUNIQUE, THE PLO WAS PLAYING IT AS CLEAR SOVIET RECOGNITION. HE SAID THAT THE ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS IN THE COMMUNIQUE REFLECTED PLO DISTASTE FOR 242. IN GENERAL HE FELT THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGING THE PLO TOWARD MODERATION.

3. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PALESTINIAN "REPRESENTATION" IN MOSCOW, HAFEZ SAID HE HAD ASKED THE ARAFAT DELEGATION ABOUT THAT. HIS UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE OFFICE WILL NOT HAVE DIPLOMATIC STATUS AND WILL NOT BE ACCREDITED TO THE MFA OR ANY OTHER SOVIET GOVERNMENTAL BODY. RATHER, IT WILL BE ACCREDITED TO THE SOVIET AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE. HAFEZ SAID THAT THE PLO HAD SOUGHT AN INFORMATION OFFICE IN MOSCOW, BUT THAT THE SOVIETS HAD BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRECEDENT THIS WOULD SET.

4. ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA WITH "EQUAL RIGHTS," HAFEZ SAID THE MEANING OF THAT COMMUNIQUE PASSAGE WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT DURING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. HE DID NOT FEEL THE SOVIETS WOULD WANT TO HOLD UP THE RECONVENING OF THE CONFERENCE FOR THE SAKE OF THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE-- A POSITION CONFIRMED DURING MY TALK LATER THAT DAY WITH SOVIET FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KUZNETSOV (SEPTTEL).

5. I ASKED HAFEZ ABOUT THE REPORTS THAT THE SOVIETS HAD AGREED TO SUPPLY ARMS DIRECTLY TO THE PLO. HE SAID HE DOUBTED THAT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WAS MADE AND ADDED THAT THE PLO COULD GET ARMS FROM SEVERAL ARAB COUNTRIES (AMONG WHICH HE SURPRISINGLY MENTIONED EGYPT.)

6. HAFEZ EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE VIABILITY OF A SEPARATE PALESTINIAN STATE. HE FELT, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT

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A PALESTINIAN WEST BANK UNDER JORDANIAN SUPERVISION COULD BE AN ATTRACTIVE PROPOSITION SINCE, GIVEN THEIR NATIVE TALENTS, THE PALESTINIANS WOULD GAIN GREAT POLITICAL INFLUENCE IN SUCH A GROUPING.

7. HAFEZ SEEMED FAIRLY RELAXED ABOUT SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. WHILE HE CONCEDED THAT THERE WAS STRONG SOVIET PRESS CRITICISM OF EGYPT'S COURSE, HE SAID THE LARGE

SOVIET STAKE IN EGYPT SET LIMITS TO HOW FAR THE SOVIETS WOULD CARRY THEIR NEGATIVISM. HE REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO THE HEAVY SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN THE EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES, IN HEAVY INDUSTRY, AND IN TRADE. WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT EGYPT MIGHT CURRENTLY BE SEEKING A BALANCE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST, HAFEZ SAID THAT THE SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN EGYPT MADE BALANCE DIFFICULT; THE WEST WAS SIMPLY NOT INTERESTED IN GOING IN ON THAT SCALE.

8. ASKED ABOUT A SUMMIT MEETING, HAFEZ SAID THAT IT WAS NOT "ON THE TABLE" RIGHT NOW, BUT HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT A BREZHNEV VISIT TO CAIRO WOULD TAKE PLACE "IN DUE COURSE." HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE EGYPTIANS DID NOT WANT PODGORNÝ AS A SUBSTITUTE. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF A SUMMIT, SAYING IT WAS NEEDED TO CLARIFY BILATERAL RELATIONS. HE SAID HE EXPECTED THE POSTPONED FAHMY VISIT TO TAKE PLACE, AS INDICATED, IN OCTOBER OR POSSIBLY NOVEMBER.
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